

but our air and the quality and quantity of our very limited supplies of water. It was noted that large oil shale development will bring significant population growth and is likely to put stress on the ability of local communities to provide the needed services.

In short, the report reminded us how much Colorado and our neighbors had at stake when Congress debated the oil shale provisions of the 2005 Energy Policy Act.

As I said, that law now calls for a crash program. I have been concerned, as many people have in Colorado, that that would bring a rush to commercial development before the Interior Department knows enough to do it right and before Colorado's communities have had a chance to prepare for what it will bring.

My concerns grew this year, when a witness from RAND told our committee that the economic, technical and environmental feasibility of oil shale development is not adequate to support the formulation of a commercial leasing program on the time scale mandated and the fundamental approach the Department of the Interior is currently taking may be counter-productive if the goal is to keep open the option for a sustainable domestic oil shale industry. Chairman RAHALL's bill would correct some of those problems.

I want to be clear, I strongly support oil shale provisions, because I think they will help assure that any commercial development is done in an orderly way that takes full advantage of the important research and development work underway.

The bill would also relax the unrealistic deadline for the BLM to finish the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement now underway, and then the bill would allow a year, not just 6 months more, for the BLM to prepare a draft, not a final, but a draft commercial leasing regulation, after which the people in Colorado and elsewhere would have 180 days to comment.

I also support the bill and its mandate for developing a strategy for sustainable and publicly acceptable large-scale development of oil shale in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, and its continued requirement that we consult with the governors of those States.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the Natural Resources Committee on a bipartisan basis adopted my amendment to set aside part of the money that the Federal Government will get from oil shale leases to help affected counties pay for construction, operation and maintenance of public facilities and for the provision of public services. This addition reflects my concern about what large-scale oil shale development can mean for Colorado's Western Slope.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that the full House will follow our committee's lead and approve these changes in the current law. I certainly will do all I can to help Chairman RAHALL be successful in this effort. But there is a risk that

these efforts could be frustrated unless Congress first acts to relieve the pressure current law puts on the BLM to move ahead on a crash basis.

Mr. Chairman, that is the purpose of the amendment, and I urge the adoption of the amendment.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I want to tell the gentleman that I think he has got a good amendment here. Our side is prepared to accept your amendment.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I thank the chairman for his support.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I hate to have to disagree with my colleague from Colorado on this issue, but I definitely do so. Oil shale resources in the United States, as was just stated, are tremendous. The potential is that there could be 2 trillion, not billion, 2 trillion barrels of oil in place in the oil shale bands of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. It is, therefore, a strategically important domestic resource that should be developed on an accelerated basis to reduce our growing dependence on politically and economically unstable sources of foreign oil imports.

The Department of Interior has issued the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and is now working on regulations for a commercial leasing program. Stopping them now in their tracks would be a waste of taxpayer dollars. I should point out, Mr. Chairman, that the research and development of this important resource have been paid for by the private sector at no cost to the taxpayer.

The Udall amendment is unnecessary, because oil shale provisions in the Energy Policy Act of 2005 require approval of the governor before commercial leasing can go forward. So it is not yet entirely even in place. Therefore, this amendment would delay development of this important domestic resource.

If we commercialize oil shale, that would provide significant public benefits, including increased fuels available, reduced risk of supply disruption, reduced imports, improved balance of payments, new Federal and State royalty and tax revenues, increased domestic employment and increased economic growth. Tremendous benefits will come from this.

Further, oil from shale will place appreciable downward pressure on the world prices of crude oil, which would improve America's, and, indeed, the entire world's economies.

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Oil shale is highly concentrated and gives the greatest yield of oil per acre disturbed of any of the Nation's energy resources. The oil shale resources of the Nation, besides totaling 2 trillion barrels, would yield 750 billion barrels with a richness of 25 gallons per ton or greater with near-term adaptations of existing technology. It is possible that an oil shale industry could be initiated

by 2011, with an aggressive goal of 2 million barrels a day by 2020, which would create 100,000 new jobs directly and indirectly, and ultimately the capacity could reach 10 million barrels a day, which is comparable to the oil sands up in Canada.

So apart from the energy independence problems that this amendment would cause, that production of oil shale is close to starting, and, therefore, it is not right to pull the rug out from under the private sector companies that have been working on and investing in this resource.

In summary, there is no proven need to delay the use of this exciting new source of domestic energy. The environmental concerns have been addressed in a responsible and careful way. Billions of gallons of oil will make our country freer from foreign pressure and our economy stronger, with more energy available, gasoline prices lower at the pump, and more jobs for our working families.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, the first chart that will eventually come up here, and I am sorry about this, indicates the States in the United States that have the hardest time increasing their education funding. This is where the funding is growing the slowest.

You notice the common denominator with these is not an attitude towards education, it is that most of these are land-based States. The land has been taken away from us to develop a property tax base. Fortunately, God has given us resources underneath that to compensate for that. But any program that would retard the leases or the royalties that will come from those will harm education in Western States.

My kids in Utah will be put at a disadvantage because of this particular amendment. There is collateral damage that takes place with amendments, and one of those deals with education.

If you can look at this chart in the proper way, this chart shows the salaries that are given for first-year teachers in Wyoming versus the salaries on average for fourth-year teachers in Montana. Now, this should not be that way, because Montana has the fewest amount of public lands of any of the Western States. They have more of a property tax base. The difference is Wyoming has the resources that they have developed, which allows them simply to put more money into their education system.

My colleagues who are still teachers deserve a decent salary, they deserve a decent retirement, we deserve the right to build our public schools. When you ask anything that shackles them from a brighter future, either by postponing or forcing to replot the data that the professional land managers have already established, it harms them.

You have taken away our land for property tax benefits. Allow us to develop the resources so that we can have